

A PRELIMINARY REPORT UPON THE TREATMENT OF HAY FEVER BY ALCOHOLIC INJECTION.*

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Hay fever has been the bugbear of physicians for years. In the past, when a patient suffering from hay fever came to us for treatment, we felt helpless and said there was little or no cure. It is true that in many cases we found deformities of the nose such as deflected septums, enlarged turbinates, septal spurs, etc., which seemed to contribute to the disease, but unfortunately the correction of these deformities, as a rule, did not relieve the distressing symptoms which arose from the hay fever itself. I think a great deal of injurious operative procedure has been carried out in these cases, especially the removal of the turbinate bodies and that much harm was done by these operations, and after all it was very rare indeed when this operative work produced any beneficial results on the hay fever symptoms.

Several years ago it was suggested to me by my friend Dr. James A. Black of San Francisco, that alcohol injected into the mucous membrane of the nose would relieve hay fever. At the time I thought but little of the suggestion and in fact had very little faith in it, but as different hay fever patients presented themselves, and I was unable to relieve them by other means, I finally decided to try the injection of 95% alcohol into the nose as a cure or relief for hay fever.

One of the first upon which I used the treatment was a particular friend of mine, Mr. S.—, then Mayor of Fresno. The reaction was so great that the Mayor thought he was ruined for life and suffered much more intensely for a few days than he had previously. However, much to his surprise after about ten days, his symptoms entirely disappeared and he has never had a return of the trouble to the present date. With this beginning, I tried an occasional case until about four years ago when I commenced to treat all cases of hay fever that came to me in this same manner. At first I was surprised to find that nearly all of the cases were entirely relieved of the symptoms. At the present time, after treating sixty or seventy cases, I am very much surprised if the patient is not relieved.

I make the injection directly into the turbinate body, especially the lower turbinate, also into the sides of the septum as well. The treatment is somewhat painful, even, although, the nasal cavity has been thoroughly anesthetized. There is no pain at the entrance of the needle but upon the injection of the alcohol into the tissues the patient complains of considerable pain for a few moments at each injection, provided the alcohol is properly injected. Several injections should be made on each side, and I have felt in some of the cases in which the treatment was not a success, that the fault lay in my technique rather than with the treatment itself. There is considerable reaction following the treatment lasting from two to seven

days. Relief from the sneezing is usually immediate. I usually prescribe an antiseptic spray to relieve the congestion.

I have been asked by different physicians if there is not an atrophic change following the treatment; loss of smell or some other sequelæ. From a great many patients whom I have treated, inquired of, and examined, I can say that in no case has any bad effect or the loss of smell been observed, and in fact no bad effects in any way have followed the treatment so far as I could observe, and no extreme symptoms have been noticed at the time of the treatment.

It is not my purpose to try to explain how this treatment acts upon the tissues nor do I feel equal to explaining the etiology of hay fever, other than to say that it has been supposed to be due to some pollen which is inhaled and causes an irritation of the schneiderian membrane and the nerves of the nose. Dr. Grant Selfridge of San Francisco has been doing extensive work along the line of study of pollenization and the study of vaccine treatment for hay fever. Dr. Selfridge deserves great credit for his work along this line, and believes more firmly than ever in the influence of pollen in true hay fever. It is possible the ductless glands play some important role in its etiology. At any rate, I am sure, as I can prove by numerous cases, that the effect of this injection upon the nerve centers is to remove entirely in a great majority of cases, the sensibility to the pollen, if it be the cause, and in other cases to, a great extent. I presume the injection acts upon the nerves of the nose in the same manner the injection of the branches of the tri-facial nerve relieves facial neuralgia. As to the permanency of the cure, it varies with different people. Some cases which I treated four or five years ago have never had an attack since, although they had suffered each spring and summer previous to the treatment. Others are relieved for one season and have a return of the symptoms each year. Most cases, however, seem to be cured permanently. I have used vaccine to some extent but with little result.

I will report a few cases I have treated within the last few years.

Mrs. C., age about 18 years of Merced, Cal., treated in 1915. Had suffered very severely for several seasons, so much so in fact, that each year she was forced to go to the beach or the mountains. She was rather a nervous individual and probably not as well treated as some other patients. After a few days all symptoms disappeared and at last report, several months ago, she had suffered no return of the trouble. She has been so much pleased with the treatment that she has referred numerous cases to me.

Miss D., age 22, teacher by profession. Had hay fever for several years, also several other members of her family were similarly affected very severely. Was treated in the usual manner and after a few days reported herself entirely relieved. During the summer vacation following the treatment she visited relatives in Texas where several members of the family were affected with the hay fever and was overjoyed to find that she had no return of the attacks.

Dr. I. Had suffered intensely from hay fever. Was treated in 1918 and secured only partial relief. So far this season has suffered somewhat but not

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so severely as heretofore. This is one case that cannot be termed a cure.

Mr. K., age 35, member Fresno City Fire Department, referred by local physician. He was suffering severely, tears streaming from his eyes which were red and inflamed, and nose completely obstructed and claimed he had been unable to sleep for several nights. Was treated in the usual manner and returned twenty-four hours afterward so much relieved that he looked like a changed individual. He still remains entirely relieved.

Mr. L., Southern Pacific employee from Tracy, had suffered for three or four years. Was injected on May 10, 1919, and has had perfect relief since that date.

Miss N., age 19, of Visalia, treated in July, 1918. Had suffered from severe attacks for several years. Had a deflected septum which was operated and at the same sitting was injected for hay fever. Had perfect relief until May, 1919, when she again presented herself for treatment. Have not heard from her since the treatment, which occurred on May 21, consequently cannot give the results of the second treatment.

Miss H., age 30. Suffered so severely that each season for the past six or seven years was compelled to go to the mountains or the coast. Was treated on May 2, 1919, and relief was almost immediate. Claims she has practically not sneezed since the treatment.

Mr. H., age 17, of Visalia. Was a very timid individual and I had considerable difficulty in making the injection properly, but he was nevertheless entirely relieved almost immediately. In fact within a week was working as a "hand" in the hay field and has had no return of the symptoms.

Miss F., age 30, of Visalia. Had suffered for years. Was treated in Visalia but not to my entire satisfaction. Had considerable reaction and reported to me two weeks ago that she was not entirely relieved. Since that time her family physician advised me that she was improving.

Mrs. B., a sister of one of the leading physicians of the valley, was referred to me by her brother. She was suffering from a deflected septum which was operated and at the same sitting was injected for the hay fever. She was immediately relieved of all hay fever symptoms practically from the hour of the treatment. I saw her on May 30 and she expressed herself as being very greatly pleased with the result of the treatment, since this is the first season for several years that she has not suffered intensely.

As I said before, in the cases in which a cure was not effected, I am unable to say whether it is due to improper technique on my part, or a peculiar susceptibility of the patient, but I hope to get in touch with most of these unsuccessful cases and see if they cannot be relieved. I have mentioned these cases to show that not every case is cured but I believe my ratio has been five out of six, and most of the cases have had but one treatment.

The treatment is not, as I mentioned before, extremely painful, but it is not as entirely devoid of pain as one would suppose it should be. Some patients seem to suffer very little, while others claim the pain is intense.

I wish to quote verbatim from a letter I received a few days ago from a patient (a minister), Mr. D., whom I treated about April 15, 1919. He had no operation other than the injection of the alcohol into the nose. His letter, dated May 28th, is as follows:

"I have been slow in writing you because I have been out of town and have also been extremely

busy. But this delay has made it possible for me to test out the results of the work you did on my nostrils for the hay-fever. I appear to have received a cure. All symptoms of the hay-fever have passed away. I do not sneeze, my nostrils have cleared completely and I breathe without any hindrance. My eyes do not smart or run any more. It is six years since I began having the hay-fever and every spring I would lose my efficiency and would suffer very much from it, but I feel splendid now, better than in years, and I feel that I am under obligations to you for it. I shall let my friends know about this."

In conclusion:

First—The vaccine treatment of hay fever has not been all that we would desire, and while I am hoping that in time something promising along this line will be found, I do not think as yet the solution of the problem has been found in the vaccines.

Second—The alcohol treatment is much quicker, only one treatment being required usually, and the result in most cases is permanent.

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CHILDREN'S YEAR IN CALIFORNIA.*

By ADELAIDE BROWN, M. D., San Francisco.

The second year of America's entrance into the world war was declared "Children's Year" by President Wilson. Under the Program of the Children's Bureau, Department of Labor, Washington, —suggested by Miss Julia Lathrop, Director—the slogan "Save 100,000 Babies," of the 300,000 deaths under one year of age in the United States, was established.

This Program was undertaken by the Women's Committee of the Council of Defense, and Dr. Jessica Peixotto of the University of California went to Washington, as Chairman. The Children's Bureau co-operated in every way in printing, extending franking privilege to State Chairman, etc. The States were organized under a State Chairman, and each County under its own Chairman of Children's Year.

California was organized in April, 1918, and secured at once the endorsement of the State Medical Society and the State Board of Health,—thus acknowledging that no program for better health in childhood could be put through without the cordial support and work of the medical profession.

California's share of the babies to be saved is 1822. Our actual results cannot be given before June. The epidemic-free months of the year will be the basis for estimating the effect of the teaching of better child-care during Children's Year.

The work was organized in 52 Counties in the State. The State Board of Health issued its June Bulletin as a "Children's Year Bulletin," and 15,000 copies were distributed. This Bulletin included a very careful article on "Vaccination," certain articles on "Child Hygiene," as well as those on "Birth Registration," "Clean Milk" and "Child Welfare."

The National Program was divided into three campaigns, —

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